

Agricultural Marketing Service
Office of the Deputy Administrator
for Marketing Program Operations
Fruit & Vegetable Division
Regulatory Branch
Agricultural Commodity Grader GS-1980-07

SJ FV7

I. INTRODUCTION

The regional office is responsible for administering the Perishable Agricultural Commodity Act (PACA) and the Produce Agency Act. One of the primary functions of the PACA is the detection and elimination of misrepresentation and/or misbranding of perishable agricultural commodities shipped or offered for sale in interstate or foreign commerce.

The incumbent of this position is responsible primarily for conducting inspection services as they relate to misbranding.

II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Incumbent performs assignments for the purpose of making inspections as they relate to misbranding and/or misrepresentation. Specifically, the incumbent inspects the product to determine its quality, condition, and/or its compliance to other stated contract specifications. As necessary, the incumbent will be required to explain misbranding determinations to the appropriate industry employee.

Performs office or market agency fact gathering in specific areas of the marketing of perishable agricultural commodities.

Prepares reports indicating records reviewed and facts established for use in determining violations of the PACA.

Travels with higher graded marketing specialist, or alone, throughout the United States and conducts and/or assists in conducting misbranding investigations.

As necessary, will also gather information on fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables and will prepare reports that may assist in investigation of other violations of the Act.

III. EVALUATION FACTORS

1. Knowledge Required by the Position

750 Points

Thorough knowledge of the PAC Act and the Produce Agency Act.

Knowledge of the official standards and regulations, or pertinent product characteristics, and of common product defects as applied to a limited variety of fruits and vegetables.

Knowledge of transportation, storage, and handling practices insofar as they may be causes of product defects, and as applied to a limited variety of products.

Skill in inspecting and grading assigned product varieties and in maintaining interpersonal relationships with industry personnel.

2. Supervisory Controls

125 Points

The grader normally receives daily inspection and grading assignments from the supervisor, who also assigns the priority of the individual assignments.

Recurring assignments (i.e., those involving products familiar to the employee) are performed without specific technical instructions. However, if unusual or difficult situations with the product arise, the supervisor is consulted for interpretation and guidance or for making the final determinations. Assignments involving a product which is new or unusual to the grader are normally performed under direct supervision and guidance.

The work is reviewed for technical accuracy and completeness through spot checks of inspection and grading while it is being performed and through review of inspection worksheets.

3. Guidelines

125 Points

The primary guidelines are the official grade standards, physical models and visual aids, agency instruction manuals, supplemental technical and administrative directives of the Regulatory Branch concerning the misbranding of fruits and vegetables and the PAC Act and the Agency Produce Act.

The employee independently selects and applies the appropriate guides that, in most cases, are familiar. Borderline grading and inspection determinations, or assignments involving products unfamiliar to the employee, are referred to the supervisor for a decision. In addition, the number of guides applicable to the work are limited.

4. Complexity

75 Points

The work primarily involves the direct inspection and grading of products. The techniques and methods used in the inspection process are closely related, and variations in the work stem chiefly from differences among the types of products inspected. In addition, a limited variety of products are assigned to the grader.

The evaluations of storage, transportation, and sanitation conditions required by the duties are not technically complicated.

5. Scope and Effect 150 Points

Assignments involve making some final grade and condition determinations for the purpose of determining whether product misbranding exists. Determinations made may affect the financial interests of buyers and sellers.

6. Personal Contacts 25 Points

Contacts include employees and managers of firms involved in fruit and vegetable marketing such as packing or processing facilities, receivers, vendors, brokers, and shippers.

7. Purpose of Contacts 120 Points

The purpose is to conduct inspection to insure compliance with PACA and promote and maintain cooperation and suitable working relations with the persons in the industry by explaining the agency program and resolving conflicts. This includes explaining and defending grade or condition determinations.

8. Physical Demands 50 Points

The work requires periods of considerable physical exertion, such as lifting heavy cartons and crates (often over 50 pounds); climbing into boxcars and trucks; and moving, crouching, and crawling in cramped areas.

9. Work Environment 20 Points

The work environment includes exposure to adverse outdoor weather; working in refrigerated areas; and exposure to fumes and odors from coolants.

Total Points 1440